

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This Amendment is in response to the Final Office Action mailed June 24, 2009. Claims 1-22 were pending the present application. This Amendment amends claims 1, 8 and 15. Applicants submit that no new matter has been introduced by virtue of these amendments. Reconsideration of the rejected claims is respectfully requested.

I. EXAMINER INTERVIEW

An interview was conducted with Examiner Ahluwalia on approximately August 5, 2009, with a follow-up interview conducted on September 10, 2009. At both times, Applicants were represented by the undersigned. During the August interview, Applicants presented arguments why certain elements of claim 1 were not disclosed, taught, or suggested by the cited art, individually or in combination. While no agreement with respect to allowance was reached at that time, during the September follow-up interview, Examiner Ahluwalia indicated that the application would be allowed if Applicants incorporated subject matter from claim 4 into claim 1 and made similar amendments to the other pending independent claims, specifically, claims 8 and 15. Applicants thank the Examiner for agreeing to allow the application with the aforementioned amendments and present this response accordingly.

II. CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Lord et al. (US 2003/0028515) further in view of Miloushev et al. (US 2004/0133577).

For at least reasons discussed in Applicants' response filed March 10, 2009, and discussed during the aforementioned August interview, Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims, prior to the present amendment, recite subject matter that is not disclosed, taught, suggested, or otherwise rendered obvious by the cited art. Nevertheless, solely for the purpose of expediting prosecution, Applicants have amended claim 1 to incorporate the subject matter of claim 4 in order to even further distinguish the subject matter recited in claim 1 from

the cited art, as suggested by the Examiner. Similarly, Applicants have amended claim 8 to incorporate subject matter from claim 11 and amended claim 15 to incorporate subject matter from claim 17 in order to further distinguish claims 8 and 15 from the cited art. Because the subject matter of claims 4, 11, and 17 is incorporated into claims 1, 8, and 15, respectively, claims 4, 11, and 17 have been cancelled accordingly. As indicated by the Examiner, these amendments place independent claims 1, 8, and 15 in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully submit that the dependent claims are allowable at least because they depend on an allowable claim. Further, Applicants respectfully submit that the pending dependent claims further recite patentable subject matter, at least for reasons previously discussed.

III. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Unless otherwise specified or addressed in the remarks section, amendments to the claims are made for purposes of clarity, and are not intended to alter the scope of the claims or limit any equivalents thereof. The amendments are supported by the specification and do not add new matter. In addition, by focusing on specific claims and claim elements in the discussion above, Applicants do not imply that other claim elements are disclosed or suggested by the references. In addition, any characterizations of claims and/or cited art are being made to facilitate expeditious prosecution of this application. Applicants reserve the right to pursue at a later date any other broader or narrower claims that capture any subject matter supported by the present disclosure, including subject matter found to be specifically disclaimed herein or by another prosecution. Accordingly, reviewers of this or any child or related prosecution history shall not reasonably infer that Applicants have made any disclaimers or disavowals of any subject matter supported by the present disclosure.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance and an action to that end is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 206-467-9600.

Respectfully submitted,

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